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Watch out for the Israeli breakaway!

By **MICHAEL KNOX** Wycombe 0, Israel F.A. 1

ISRAEL, who meet Scotland in a World Cup qualifying match this week, had things by no means all their own way in a warm-up match at Loakes Park on Thursday.

Fielding at least eight of the side that will play at Hampden Park tonight, Israel had to struggle to beat a buoyant Wycombe Wanderers, who had much the better of the territorial battle.

Indeed the international visitors, who naturally were not playing flat out, found themselves under considerable pressure for much of the match — but they were lethal on the counter-attack, something that should serve them well against Scotland.

TV. cameras

But Wycombe, who themselves faced a crucial league match two days later, deserve every credit for their determined attitude and attractive play which entertained a four figure crowd.

Perhaps they were trying to live up to their reputation

as Football League hopefuls — or perhaps it was the fact that television cameras from B.B.C. Scotland (complete with Archie McPherson) were filming the game.

Wycombe dictated the match for the first half hour and Terry Scott, Mick Holifield and Paul Birdseye all had half-chances to put them ahead.

Israel's only chance came when Tabak intercepted Holifield's back pass. But Chris Way, deputising for the injured Gary Lester, came off his line quickly to avert the danger.

But then in a display of stunning speed of thought and action, Israel broke away to score the only goal of the match.

It all started from a Wycombe corner. A clearance found Benny Tabak on the left, and he stormed past Bob Davies (no slouch himself) and he chipped the ball over the defence, to the unmarked Shabtai Levi who drove a low shot past Way from 15 yards.

Blues so nearly equalised before the break. Steve Long saw a good shot saved, the

dangerous Birdseye had an effort tipped round by the goalkeeper and then Jim Jacobs struck a post.

Mike Keen made several substitutions during the second half as Wanderers continued to dictate much of the play — but again it was the Israelis who went closest to scoring with two more devastating breaks.

First the dangerous Tabak hit the post and then Nissim Cohen struck the underside of the bar. So the Israelis, managed by former Reading boss Jack Mansell, can claim they were unlucky not to have won by a greater margin.

But that would have been a scant injustice to Wycombe, who so nearly equalised in the closing moments when Andy Hunt headed inches over.

WYCOMBE: C. Way; P. Birdseye, J. Jacobs (sub: A. Hunt 78 mins), R. Davies (sub: A. Vircaus 45 mins), K. Mead (sub: S. Dexter 58 mins), M. Holifield, H. Kennedy, K. Wilson (sub: R. Dell 64 mins), T. Glynn, T. Scott, S. Long.

ISRAEL XI: J. Misraki; G. Machness, J. Ekois, S. Kirat, N. Cohen, M. Sinai, I. Shum, G. Damti, Shabtai Levi, B. Tabak, D. Almog (sub: C. Zitouni 50 mins).

Referee: W. G. V. Cleere (Downley).

Half-time 0-1. **Scorer:** Israel — Levi (34 mins).